

U. S. Department of Justice

(MATERIAL MUST NOT BE REMOVED FROM OR ADDED TO THIS FILE)

ENTIRE FILE REVIEWED
FOR HISTORICAL
DECLASSIFICATION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 10/5/06 BY 60309 ucl from
KSE/og

FEDERAL BUREAU

of

INVESTIGATION

Declassification
authority
derived from FBI
Automatic
Declassification
Guide,
issued May 24,
2007

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(RD-F) 10-17-2018
FOIA # 58950 DOCID:
34278200

USE CARE IN HANDLING THIS FILE

Transfer-Call 421

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

FROM : SAC, Oklahoma City

SUBJECT: MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT
ATOMIC ENERGY ACT

DATE: November 19, 1947

On October 14, 1947 Mr. P. M. JUVENAL, Security Officer, Tinker Field, Oklahoma City, advised this office that the above named individual appeared at Tinker Field on that date, attempting to obtain employment as a Press Agent at a reported salary of approximately \$7,200 a year. She was interviewed by Mr. JUVENAL under the pretext of being a Personnel Counselor, and she advised that she had been writing articles on atomic, nuclear, ionic, and ray warfare for the Atomic Energy Commission. These articles had been submitted to the War Department for ATC. She claimed to have been in close contact with scientists of Los Alamos, New Mexico, and her divorced husband, BENSON MERCHANT, one of the original engineers at that facility. She also claimed to be in close contact with FBI Agent FEMMER (phonetic) at Santa Fe, New Mexico. Mrs. MERCHANT advised that she was presently residing with her mother, Mrs. H. E. MYERS, 918 Northeast 18th Street, Oklahoma City.

Mr. JUVENAL advised that MERCHANT did not give any information which could be construed as confidential, but claimed to have written articles under her maiden name, MADELINE GWYNNE, on various theories, and that these articles had met with wide acclaim. Mr. JUVENAL expressed the opinion that Mrs. MERCHANT was probably a psychopathic case. She claimed that she was well known to the FBI, AEC, and U. S. Army.

By teletype dated October 14, 1947 the El Paso Office was requested to furnish this office with any information in their files concerning Mrs. MERCHANT.

By teletype of the same date the El Paso Office advised that Mrs. MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT had visited the Santa Fe Resident Agency, at which time she advised that she had received several reports concerning light objects seen at night and followed by explosions. She claimed to be a student of radio waves and reportedly discussed the above flying objects with officials of AEC, Los Alamos, New Mexico, including SIDNEY NEWBERGER, Chief of Intelligence. MERCHANT was also reported to have written the Secretary of War and other government officials concerning her theories. The El Paso Office advised that officials of the AEC, Los Alamos, consider MERCHANT to be unreliable and possibly not well balanced mentally.

62-83894-76
ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 10/5/06 BY 60309 WJ/TJ
KSRG

RECORDED
INDEXED
NOV 22 1947

Director, FBI
Re: Madeline Gwynne Merchant
Atomic Energy Act

November 19, 1947

On October 22, 1947 Mrs. MERCHANT personally appeared at the Oklahoma City Office, at which time she stated that she wanted to report that on October 10, 1947 a disc was sighted north of Oklahoma City by her step-father and mother. This disc was traveling from the east, apparently going in a semi-circle to the northeast. She requested that this information be furnished to the Bureau for transmittal to appropriate Army officials.

It was apparent that Mrs. MERCHANT is suffering from some mental disorder and it was noticeable that she has dropsy. It is not believed that she is reliable and no investigation will be conducted by this office.

CC: El Paso

DRS:bnm
117-3

Director, FBI

November 19, 1947

SAC, Oklahoma City

MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT
ATOMIC ENERGY ACT

On October 14, 1947 Mr. P. M. JUVENAL, Security Officer, Tinker Field, Oklahoma City, advised this office that the above named individual appeared at Tinker Field on that date, attempting to obtain employment as a Press Agent at a reported salary of approximately \$7,200 a year. She was interviewed by Mr. JUVENAL under the pretext of being a Personnel Counselor, and she advised that she had been writing articles on atomic, nuclear, ionic, and ray warfare for the Atomic Energy Commission. These articles had been submitted to the War Department for AEC. She claimed to have been in close contact with scientists of Los Alamos, New Mexico, and her divorced husband, BENSON MERCHANT, one of the original engineers at that facility. She also claimed to be in close contact with FBI Agent FENNER (phonetic) at Santa Fe, New Mexico. Mrs. MERCHANT advised that she was presently residing with her mother, Mrs. H. E. MYERS, 918 Northeast 18th Street, Oklahoma City.

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/15/06 BY 60309 UAL/TAM
KSR/tj

Director, FBI

November 19, 1947

Re: Madeline Wynne Merchant
Atomic Energy Act

On October 22, 1947 Mrs. MERCHANT personally appeared at the Oklahoma City Office, at which time she stated that she wanted to report that on October 10, 1947 a disc was sighted north of Oklahoma City by her step-father and mother. This disc was traveling from the east, apparently going in a semi-circle to the northeast. She requested that this information be furnished to the Bureau for transmittal to appropriate Army officials.

It was apparent that Mrs. MERCHANT is suffering from some mental disorder and it was noticeable that she has dropsy. It is not believed that she is reliable and no investigation will be conducted by this office.

CC: El Paso

DES:dam
117-5

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : MR. D. M. LADD *DL*
 FROM : MR. H. B. FLETCHER *HBF*
 SUBJECT: MRS. MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT *MS*

DATE: November 19, 1948

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
 HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE *10/5/04* BY *60309 UC/AM*
BSK/13

Mr. Tolson _____
 Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
 Mr. Clegg _____
 Mr. Glavin _____
 Mr. Ladd _____
 Mr. Nichols _____
 Mr. Rosen _____
 Mr. Tracy _____
 Mr. Egan _____
 Mr. Gurnea _____
 Mr. Harbo _____
 Mr. Mohr _____
 Mr. Pennington _____
 Mr. Quinn Tamm _____
 Tele. Room _____
 Mr. Nease _____
 Miss Holmes _____
 Miss Gandy _____

Attached is a request from the Army Air Forces for an investigation into the "background, objectives and reliability" of the captioned subject.

A review of Bureau files reflect in file 117-286-1 that Mr. P. M. Juvenal, Security Officer, Tinker Field, Oklahoma City, advised on October 14, 1947, that in his opinion Mrs. Merchant was probably a psychopathic case. File 62-83894 Serial 37 contains information wherein Mr. Sydney Newburger, Chief of Security and Intelligence for the AEC at Los Alamos, stated officials of the AEC consider the subject unreliable and probably not well balanced. In the same serial, the El Paso office stated Mrs. Merchant personally appeared at the Oklahoma City office of the Bureau on October 22, 1947, to report information concerning "flying disks". It is stated:

"It was apparent Mrs. Merchant is suffering from some mental disorder and it was noticeable that she has dropsy. It is not believed that she is reliable....."

A card is maintained in the Crime Records Section of the Bureau indicating that Mrs. Merchant may be mentally ill.

ACTION:

In view of the above information, the Army Air Forces may not desire that the investigation requested be conducted. It is suggested that this memorandum be directed to the Liaison Section and the substance of the above be orally furnished to the Army Air Forces at which time a determination should be made as to whether that Agency still desires any action taken in this matter.

Attachment 50

EFL:jmf

117-286-2

F B I
5 JAN 11 1949

RECORDED - 114

EX-40

JAN 17 1949

117-286 - 1

December 9, 1947

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
BY SPECIAL MESSENGERRECORDED
EX-4To: Atomic Energy Commission
Room 38, Public Health Building
Washington, D. C.DECLASSIFIED BY 60309 *de/ym*
ON 10/5/06 *KSE/bo*Attention: Rear Admiral John E. Gingrich
Director of Security and Intelligence

From: John Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subject: MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT

Mr. P. M. Juvenal, Security Officer, Tinker Field, Oklahoma City, has advised the Oklahoma City Office of this Bureau that Mrs. Merchant appeared at Tinker Field on October 14, 1947 and attempted to obtain employment as a Press Agent at a reported salary of \$7,200.00 a year.

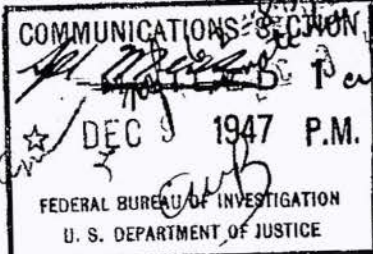
In an interview with Mr. Juvenal, she advised that she had been writing articles on atomic, nuclear, ionic, and ray warfare for the Atomic Energy Commission. She claimed to be in close contact with scientists at Los Alamos and stated that her divorced husband, Benson Merchant, was one of the original engineers at that facility. Mr. Juvenal advised that Mrs. Merchant did not give any information which could be construed as confidential, but claimed to have written articles under her maiden name, Madeline Gwynne, on various theories and that these articles had met with wide acclaim. Mr. Juvenal was of the opinion that Mrs. Merchant was probably a psychopathic case.

The files of this Bureau reflect that Mrs. Merchant contacted the El Paso Office and advised that she had received several reports concerning light objects seen at night and followed by explosions. She claimed to be a student of radio waves and reportedly discussed flying objects with officials of the Atomic Energy Commission at Los Alamos, including Mr. Sidney Newberger. She also claimed to have written the Secretary of War and other Government officials concerning her theories. The El Paso Office has advised that officials of the Commission at Los Alamos consider Mrs. Merchant to be unreliable and possibly not well balanced mentally. (See 117-186-1)

This is being furnished for your information.

CWB:AM

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Egan
Mr. Gurnea
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Pennington
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Tele. Room
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy



71 DEC 16 1947

NW#: 58950

DocId: 34278200

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: October 28, 1949

FROM : SAC, Oklahoma City

SUBJECT: MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT
ATOMIC ENERGY ACTALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 10/5/00 BY 60309 UC/TAM

Remylet 11/19/47.

By letter dated 11/25/47 the Butte office forwarded to this office the original and a carbon copy of questionnaire received by WILLIAM D. TALLEY, Canyon County Coroner, Nampa, Idaho, on November 20, 1947, apparently from the above captioned individual, who gave her address as 918 N.E. 18th St., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Enclosed herewith is the carbon copy of the questionnaire, and this office is in possession of the original.

The Butte office in their letter of November 25, 1947, advised that an explosion caused by butane gas leakage occurred at Nampa, Idaho, on November 15, 1947. Five persons were killed, 50 were injured, and three buildings were demolished as a result of the explosion. Mrs. FAY DORR, a waitress in the Canyon Cafe, across the street from the explosion, reported to the newspapers that she thought she had seen "a ball of fire" at the time of the explosion. Mr. TALLEY advised the Butte office that he had interviewed Mrs. DORR relative to the "ball of fire" and that it was concluded that Mrs. DORR had seen the reflection of the blast in a window of the Canyon Cafe.

The Butte office requested the Oklahoma City office to ascertain from Mrs. MERCHANT her reason for desiring information regarding the "ball of fire" and why she requested this information be sent to the FBI Agent at Santa Fe, New Mexico. By letter dated December 29, 1947, this office forwarded to the Butte office the information contained in referenced letter to the Bureau, and no investigation was conducted by this office since it appeared Mrs. MERCHANT was not reliable and was possibly suffering from some mental disability.

The Butte office by letter dated October 7, 1949, advises they had received correspondence from the above captioned on July 25, 1949, in which she desired information be furnished the nearest Military Security Office in that area in regard to seven V-shaped objects that were sighted over the Mountain Home Desert, which is near Boise, Idaho, on July 24, 1949, by an unidentified pilot. The Butte office advised MERCHANT claimed she had received this information in the Daily Oklahoman newspaper dated July 25, 1949.

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

ENCLOS. Enclosed with Subject's letter was a "data sheet" containing 18 questions which pertained to V-shaped objects, and according to the Butte letter, these questions were very similar to the data desired by Air Force Intelligence Offices in regard to flying saucers, discs and other similar flying objects. The Butte office has advised Subject desired no acknowledgment to her correspondence, but requested the completed questionnaire be forwarded to appropriate military security authorities. The Butte office has advised this information was furnished Army

Enclosure

cc Butte (65-0-206)

WHS:PM

117-3

RECORDED - 130

INDEXED - 130
EX-3117-286-3
F B I
12 OCT 31 1949

OC 117-3

authorities at Great Falls, Montana, Air Base; Hill Field Air Base, Ogden, Utah; McCord Field, Washington; and the Salt Lake City office.

On October 3, 1949, the Butte office received correspondence from the Inspector General, AAF, 15th District, OSI, Great Falls Air Force Base, Great Falls, Montana. Enclosed with this correspondence to the Butte office was a letter from the OSI, USAF, which advised that Subject associates with known Communists, and is considered dangerous, and further that Subject's letter was being forwarded to the Air Materiel Section for evaluation. The Butte office requested the Oklahoma City office to obtain all information in possession of the Headquarters Office, OSI, at Washington, D.C., concerning Subject's association with known Communists.

The Oklahoma City office has no information concerning Subject not already provided to the Bureau in referenced letter, except that one Mrs. MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT, by letter to this office dated August 2, 1948, advised she had attended Oklahoma University in the Spring of 1935, at which time she had attended lectures given by one Dr. EATON (possibly identical with HOWARD O. EATON, Professor of Philosophy.) Subject stated she was suspicious of Dr. EATON since he had recommended to her as his student, that she give serious consideration to Socialist or State ownership of all property. She advised that he also suggested that such a change in concepts might be effected by legislation, and should that not be effective, "mild force" or "mild revolution" might have to occur.

The files of this office reflect HOWARD O. ~~EATON~~ was Faculty Adviser of the Equal Education Committee at the University of Oklahoma, which, according to informants, is controlled by Communist Party members.

In view of the above, the Bureau is requested to obtain from the Headquarters of OSI any information they have concerning Subject and/or her association with known Communists. No investigation will be conducted by this office inasmuch as it appears from information in the file that she is mentally unbalanced.

Director, FBI

October 28, 1949

SAC, Oklahoma City

MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT
ATOMIC ENERGY ACT

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 10/5/84 BY 60309 K/L/TAM
15219

Remylet 11/19/47.

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Enclosure
cc Butte (65-0-206)

VHS:PM
117-3

OC 117-3

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/5/04 BY 60329 UC/ram
KSR/BJ



117-286-3

ENCLOSURE

Enclosure to Bureau
MADELINE GWYNNE MERCHANT
ATOMIC ENERGY ACT
OC 117-3

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/5/06 BY 60309 uc/tem
RSE/tz

918 N.E. 18th St.

Oklahoma City (5) Okla.

Nov. 17, 1947

Mr. William D. Talley,
Canyon County Coroner,
Nampa, Idaho.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 10/6/04 BY 60209 DC/Jan
KSL/97

Dear Sir:

Will you kindly answer the following questions concerning the
"ball-of-fire" described in a news release as seen by Mrs. Fay Dorr and
others on Sunday, Nov. 16, 1947?

1. Was the reported number of persons killed (five) correct? _____
2. Of the fifty persons reported injured, how many are seriously
injured _____
3. Are the injured suffering from burns similar to lightning burns?

4. Direction from which "ball-of-fire" came. _____
5. Size, (as accurate as possible) _____
6. Was it seen by others before it entered the cafe kitchen _____
7. Did it explode? _____
8. Color _____
9. Exact hour of occurrence _____
10. Shape of object _____
11. Remarks: _____

12. What was the state of the weather? _____

On a separate sheet of paper, please give any other unusual impressions of those
seeing the "ball-of-fire."

NW#: 58950

Thanking you very kindly for your earliest possible reply, I am,
DocId: 34278200

Sincerely,

(2)

cc/ The carbon copy enclosed should be mailed to Mr. Francis Finley, FBI Agent-
In-Charge.
Federal Building,
Santa Fe, N.M.

P.S. This communication should not be discussed any more than absolutely
necessary to secure the desired details, except with members of the
FBI or official members of the War Dep't.

Additional remarks: _____

Use space below if necessary:

RECORDED - 23 117-286-3
EX-121

SAC, Oklahoma City

November 21, 1949

Director, FBI

MADAME CYRUS MERCHANT
ATOMIC ENERGY ACT
Bureau File 117-286

Reurlet dated October 28, 1949, in which you requested that the Bureau obtain from the Headquarters of the Office of Special Investigations any information that they may have concerning the subject and/or her association with known Communists.

Bureau files reflect that OSI requested an investigation concerning the background, objectives and reliability of the subject in November, 1948. This request was withdrawn on December 22, 1948, in view of the information indicating that the subject was suffering from a mental disorder.

In view of the background of this subject, no inquiry will be made by the Bureau as requested in your memorandum.

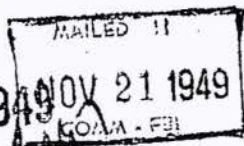
cc-Butte

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/5/04 BY 60309 AC/TEM
KSLG

KWD:mmm

Tolson _____
Ladd _____
Clegg _____
Glavin _____
Nichols _____
Rosen _____
Tracy _____
Harbo _____
Mohr _____
Tele. Room _____
Nease _____
Gandy _____

52 NOV 22 1949



AT 2 DESK OF TOLSON
RECEIVED - NOV 23 1949
NOV 21 2 30 PM '49

NW#: 58950

DocId: 34278200